



AETC News Clips

Randolph AFB, Texas



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S.A. opens its doors to refugees

Web Posted: 09/01/2005 12:00 AM CDT

San Antonio Express-News

Nearing her first baby's due date, Senior Airman Kim Harris checked into the hospital early, per fresh military orders with Hurricane Katrina on the way.

As it turned out, that didn't provide the safety her leaders had in mind.

The next morning, her basement room at Keesler AFB Medical Center in Mississippi started to flood. In shin-deep water and in the dark — the power had gone out — Harris trudged to the third floor and stayed there until she was brought to San Antonio by plane late Tuesday.

Now Harris and 30 other full-term pregnant women from Keesler are waiting it out at Wilford Hall Medical Center.

"It's stressful, because I'm about to have a baby and I don't know if I have a home to take him back to," said Harris, 24, who plans to name her son Kimari. She said her fiance is training at Fort Hood and about to deploy to Iraq.



(Bahram Mark Sobhani/Express-News)

Dr. Andrea Shields examines Amy Gephart at Wilford Hall Medical Center. Gephart was one of 31 expectant moms from Keesler AFB, Miss.

The pregnant women and their families have been put up in visitors quarters at Lackland AFB, where they likely will remain until the babies arrive.

"We're all so excited to be helping others," said Lt. Col. Dana Howard, a registered nurse working with the women. "We all want to be a part of their lives and support them."

— Michelle Koidin Jaffee

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AF academy dad points to ex-cadet

He says his son was
pushed out a window
by an upperclassman.

BY ROBERT WELLER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DENVER — The Air Force Academy is investigating allegations that one cadet pushed another out a dorm window, causing him to fall 30 feet and break his back, the school confirmed Wednesday.

The victim's father, Charles Khan of St. Louis, said son Nicholas was attacked in March because he'd reported the older cadet, who since has graduated, for sexually harassing a female cadet.

Academy spokesman Johnny Whitaker said investigators were trying to determine whether there was evidence to support a charge of aggravated assault in the attack.

The name of the former cadet, who's now assigned to Hill AFB, Utah, wasn't released.

The Air Force Academy has

been beset by scandals over sexual assaults. Dozens of female cadets have said they were punished or forced to resign after reporting they were sexually assaulted.

Charles Khan, said Wednesday that trouble began when his son intervened on behalf of a female freshman who allegedly had been pressured by the senior to have sex. When the female broke off the relationship, the senior blamed cadet Khan.

The senior and other upperclassmen then began to harass cadet Khan, also a freshman, forcing him to endure extra room and uniform inspections, Charles Khan said.

According to the father's account: On March 13, the senior came to cadet Khan's room and told his roommate to leave. Once inside, he saw a written report on the harassment that cadet Khan was preparing and became enraged.

He said the academy gave his son a medical discharge.

Whitaker said a decision to file charges would have to be made by the superintendent, Lt. Gen. John Rosa.

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Brooks seen as pricier A&M option

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Greg Jefferson
Express-News Staff Writer

Despite the prospect of free land, a report delivered to the City Council says putting a Texas A&M campus at Brooks City-Base would cost \$12.7 million more than it would at the site already targeted by city and A&M officials.

"I'm a little surprised," said Mayor Phil Hardberger, who ordered the evaluation of city-owned Brooks as a potential campus location last month. "I would have thought it would be cheaper to build on free land at Brooks."

"If the figures stand up," he added, "it certainly gives credence to the city's preferred site."

The report, issued by Assistant City Manager Jelynn Burley, put the overall cost of locating the planned campus at Brooks at \$48.4 million. That includes \$39 million for road construction, \$7 million for environmental and real estate costs, \$1.5 million for water lines and \$850,000 for wastewater infrastructure.

By comparison, locating at the southwest quadrant of South Loop 410 and U.S. 281 — the city's preferred site — would cost \$35.7 million, according to the report. That includes \$12.6 million to buy out about 100 property owners.

The biggest expense, estimated at \$18.7 million, would be road projects. Burley said that figure covers estimates for street construction in and around the 400-acre site, not just for roads that would snake through the campus.

At Brooks, most of the \$39 million estimate was tied to construction beyond the campus borders. The report pegged the cost of road building directly tied to an A&M campus at \$15.9 million.

The \$39 million "is an estimate of the total traffic infrastructure required so that transportation functions smoothly," Burley said. The \$15.9 million estimate "is basically the internal circulation for the campus itself. That's assuming no one drives on or off the campus."

She also noted that estimates at both sites are preliminary:

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- **July 23:** Mayor directs staff to study Brooks as potential A&M site
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- **July 13:** S.A. higher ed crosses fingers after bill OK'd
- **June 5:** South Side project looking troubled
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- **May 5:** South Side builder wants tax aid
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- **April 28:** Planning firm begins crafting blueprint for City South plan
- **April 26:** CPS ups ante for A&M campus
- **March 6:** Mayor, developer, A&M tied in plans
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"They have not been fully engineered."

But former Mayor Howard Peak, chairman of the Brooks Development Authority, questioned whether the \$39 million took too much into account.

To do the analysis, officials placed a hypothetical 532-acre campus in the western portion of the 1,400-acre base. The report listed 19 potential street projects.

"The issue as it relates to the A&M campus is that the \$39 million addresses not just the infrastructure for the campus but for (infrastructure) throughout Brooks," Peak said. Yet, road construction "will be a continuing cost as we continue to build out."

"Overall, I don't know what the assumptions are," he added, "and we'd need to know that to start comparing apples to apples."

The biggest project identified in the report was the extension of New Braunfels Avenue through Brooks, which the city's Public Works Department estimated at \$13.6 million. It's already in the works, with the development authority recently asking the city for \$2.2 million for first-phase construction.

"That's going ahead regardless," Brooks Executive Director Tom Rumora said. "Now, is that a cost to anybody else's project? Depends on how you're adding up the costs."

But good planning, he added, has to take into account factors beyond a project's boundaries that could have an impact, such as drainage and roadways.

Officeholders got the report a week ago, the same day the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission voted to move the Air Force missions out of the city-owned Brooks base.

A&M officials, meanwhile, have identified the site at Loop 410 and U.S. 281 as their choice for a South Side campus largely because of its accessibility and the potential for nearby housing for faculty and students.

Terramark Communities, a Sugar Land-based developer, has options to buy more than 800 acres of land southeast of the city's site for a mixed-use development called Espada that would include housing.

Since directing staffers to draw up the Brooks estimate, Hardberger said he's heard from A&M officials, the South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and state Sen. Frank Madla, D-San Antonio, about the importance of the preferred site.

"There has been a substantial political push to move forward on this program, and I think that feeling's still there," Hardberger said.

Lowry Mays, a San Antonio billionaire and a member of A&M's board of regents, wrote in a letter dated Aug. 1: "Texas A&M is interested in the city pursuing the original site for our campus, not (the) Brooks Air Force Base alternative. We want our own identity and to build our own campus. I thought we were all on the same page."

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A&M officials have said they previously considered Brooks but decided to keep looking.

Councilman Roland Gutierrez also supports the city's preferred site, saying it would give the Southeast Side community an economic engine apart from Brooks, which recently landed several big projects: a DPT Laboratories facility, a hospital and a 550,000-square-foot shopping center.

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Air Force Times



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August 31, 2005

Storm dumps six feet of water on Keesler

By [Bruce Rolfson](#)

Times staff writer

Keesler Air Force Base along Mississippi's Gulf Coast was flooded by more than six feet of water in some areas when Hurricane Katrina struck on Aug. 29.

There were no fatalities among the 6,000 people who rode out the storm at Keesler, but there was widespread damage to the base's classroom buildings, housing, stores and flight line facilities, said Lt. Col. Claudia Foss, head of public affairs for the Keesler's 81st Training Wing.

Keesler's southern boundary is less than a quarter mile from the Gulf shoreline, while the base's northern side fronts Biloxi's Back Bay.

As of Aug. 31 no one was putting a price tag on the damage to the base or estimating when classes would resume at the Air Education and Training Command center.

While the base recovers, the Air Force has put a 30-day hold on assigning new students and personnel to Keesler. Meanwhile, airmen and their families on Keesler were still under instructions to remain at the base's shelters and not to venture to their homes.

Foss said the base's runways are useable and likely will handle the delivery of relief supplies.

Other bases are preparing to help Keesler.

Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., is sending security forces and civil engineers while Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio is expected to take care of 25 seriously ill patients transferred from Keesler Medical Center.

Air Force Times

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Altus AFB, Okla.



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97th Air Mobility Wing chief promoted to brigadier general

BY MITCH MEADOR
STAFF WRITER
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ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE — The commander of the 97th Air Mobility Wing, Altus Air Force Base, was promoted to brigadier general in a private ceremony Tuesday.

Brig. Gen. Mark S. Solo, who has been the wing commander at Altus since August 2003, has been selected for reassignment as chief of the U.S. Office of Military Cooperation in Kuwait. A departure date has not been determined.

Presiding over the promotion ceremony was Lt. Gen. Charles L. Johnson II, commander of the U.S. Air Force's Electronics System Center in Hanscom, Mass. Solo's wife, Patty, assisted John-

son in pinning on her husband's first star, said 2nd Lt. Ashley Norris of the Altus AFB Public Affairs Office.

The wing commander removed his service jacket, and his son, Jay Solo, and daughter, Kendra Tholt, put on his general's shoulder boards, she said.

As commander of the 97th AMW, Solo is responsible for the formal training of all C-17, C-5 and KC-135 for active duty, Guard and Reserve aircrews, while maintaining worldwide capability to augment Global Reach contingency support.



SOLO